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TREATY OF PEACE.

The conduct of the French Government in the treaty of peace at the close of the war of the Revolution has been charged with a want of fidelity to the alliance, and as indicating a treacherous design to sacrifice the interests of the United States. This charge, under various forms, has been brought into the history of the country. The writer of the Paris letter, after attempting to show that Count de Vergennes would have dispensed with the definitive acknowledgment of independence, says:

"If we now pass to the authentic memorials of the treaty of peace, we discover that the French court would have left the United States under other and severer disadvantages, in a condition still more straitened and precarious. No doubt was left in the minds of the American negotiators that it was the intention of the French court to deprive them of the western regions and the northern fisheries, and to impose the stipulation of a large indemnity for the American Loyalists."

Before discussing these topics it is proper to recur again to the treaty of alliance. Does this treaty guaranty the fisheries or any specific boundaries? Does it promise that the French court will be of the same opinion as Congress at the end of the war respecting the Loyalists, and will act at all events against the demands of England? The treaty does not even touch upon any one of these topics. The only article relating to the territorial limits of the United States, is to be settled at the peace, is that in which "His most Christian Majesty guarantees their possessions and the additions or conquests that their Confederation may obtain during the war from any of the dominions now or heretofore possessed by Great Britain in North America: the whole, as their States, at the moment of the cessation of their present war with England." From the very tenor of this article, as well as from the nature of things, it is evident that the preliminary question, What were the possessions of the said States at the time of the peace? must first be settled by the parties; and a difference of opinion might assuredly exist on this head without any impairment of the good faith or honesty of either party.

It must be considered also that the French had the most justifiable reasons for a rigid construction of this as well as the other articles of the treaty. In regard to possessions, every instance of a broad construction would act against them. Schemes of conquest and growing claims might prolong the war till the resources of France were absolutely exhausted and she would be left to the mercy of her enemies. Her fears were early alarmed by the spirit manifested in Congress, where projects for conquering Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Florida were discussed, and plans partially matured, on the basis of the co-operation of France. Every such conquest would throw a new obstruction in the way of peace. It was the natural and avowed policy of France, therefore, to inculcate moderation, and to prevail on the United States to be contented with the possessions they already held.

It was in conformity with this principle that she regarded the western limits. The war of 1756 had in great part grown out of the dispute between England and France concerning the territory between the Alleghany mountains and the Mississippi. By the treaty of peace it was confirmed to England, with the right of navigating the Mississippi; and shortly afterwards Louisiana was ceded to Spain. Congress now claimed a right to this territory as a part of the United States, and also to the navigation of the Mississippi in consequence of its having been open to the Americans while subjects of the British crown. They also cited the old charters, which carried back the limits of several of the States to the South Sea.

The French court looked upon these claims as not well founded. The proclamation of the King of England soon after the peace for establishing three new Governments in America prohibited the governors from granting lands beyond the Alleghany. That proclamation, it was said, cut off the territory beyond the mountains from the provinces at the East, and it could no longer be considered as a part of them. Other arguments were used which need not here be repeated, for the design was not to gain anything for France, but to moderate the views and demands of Congress in reference to the eventual treaty. Congress desisted from the claim of a right to navigate the Mississippi, and endeavored to procure it by treaty from Spain; and it should be remembered that the Court of France favored this measure. An official memoir contains the following paragraph:

"Till the commencement of hostilities between Spain and England this latter Power had the right of navigating the Mississippi. English vessels, without paying duty or being boarded, could pass from the mouth to the source of that river. Spain would gain much if the Americans were to take the place of the English, since they would not hold a commerce with Europe through the Gulf of Mexico, and consequently they would not bring contraband goods along the shores of the Gulf. Moreover, if the Americans were allowed an establishment at New Orleans, or at some other place on the river, it would give a great impulse to commerce, the principal benefit of which would result to the Spaniards, who would have the navigation to Europe, either as proprietors or agents. It appears, therefore, that the Spaniards may, without inconvenience, accord to the Americans a commercial establishment or free port on the lower waters of the Mississippi."

As to the fisheries there never was any degree of unanimity on this subject in Congress. It gave rise to many debates while the terms of peace were under discussion. The Eastern States were strenuous for making the possession of the fisheries, as they existed under the British Government, a condition of peace; that is, the right of fishing on all the coasts belonging to the English in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence; while the Southern States, having no advantage from the fisheries, were indifferent to this right and were opposed to making it a turning point of peace or a continuance of the war. It was natural that the French should see the matter in the same light as a large minority in Congress, and for the same reason. It was a novel case in the history of negotiations. By the law of nations the right to fish on a coast belongs exclusively to the proprietor of the territory, and the use of such fisheries by other nations is always granted by treaties. The questions now to be settled were, first, whether the Americans, after having thrown off their allegiance to the British Government, could justly claim a right which they had formerly enjoyed only in virtue of being subjects of that Government; and secondly, whether they could require the French, by the terms of the treaty of alliance, to join with them in maintaining this claim, and to guaranty it as a part of their possessions. Both these questions were answered in the negative by Count de Vergennes, as will be seen by the following extracts from his letter to M. de la Luzerne, dated September 25, 1779:

"We distinguish two kinds of fisheries, that on the high sea, and that along the coasts of the main land and of islands. The first is as free as the sea itself. It is allowed to all nations, and no one can exclude from it without suffering an injury. But it is not the same with those along the coasts, which appertain to the proprietor of those coasts, and he has a right to exclude from them whom he thinks proper."

"The Americans have heretofore participated in the fisheries as subjects of the Crown of Great Britain. Hence, from the moment they threw off the English yoke, and declared themselves independent, they broke the community

which had existed between them and the mother country, and voluntarily deprived themselves of all the advantages which it had secured to them."

He inferred that, as the Americans had deprived themselves of the right to the fisheries, they could not demand a guaranty of them from the King of France. Independence was guarantied by the alliance definitively, but the possessions and conquests only as they should be found at the cessation of arms. If the fisheries were to be guarantied, why not the other privileges enjoyed by the Americans as British subjects, such as the trade to the West India Islands, and the cutting of logwood and mahogany in the Bay of Honduras? It is to be observed that the fishery in the open sea and on the banks of Newfoundland was not brought into question by M. de Vergennes. He considered it as free to the Americans as it was to any other nation.

These views of the French Court, whether right or wrong, related in their application entirely to the construction of the treaty of alliance, in regard to the extent of the guaranties, and not a desire of curtailing any privileges which the Americans might gain to themselves at the peace. It was not a question whether the Americans should establish their boundaries to suit themselves, and possess the fisheries, or not, but whether France was bound to carry on the war at all events till these were obtained. A finger was not lifted by the French Court to prevent these acquisitions. This is proved by the communications to their Ministers at other Courts, and by the whole tenor of their conduct, as well during the war as at the peace. They had nothing to gain or lose in the way of possessions, as the event proved, for, in negotiating their own treaty, these points, with reference to the United States, were not touched; and if they arranged their fishery more to their satisfaction than it existed under former treaties, this was not at the expense of the Americans. Nor was any thing done in the dark, or under false colors. Congress were well acquainted with the sentiments of the French Ministry, and the confidence of that body was not impaired, except in a few members, whose jealousies had their roots in other causes than the real merits of the points at issue.

We come now to the negotiation of peace. The American Commissioners, Adams, Franklin, and Jay, were instructed by Congress "to make the most candid and confidential communications upon all subjects to the Ministers of our generous ally, the King of France, and to undertake nothing in the negotiations for peace without their knowledge and concurrence." And the treaty of alliance stipulated that "neither of the two parties should conclude a peace or truce with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained." The first advance was made from the British Ministry, in March, 1782, by a secret agent sent to confer with Count de Vergennes concerning the disposition of the King of France in regard to peace. This agent was soon followed by another, Mr. Oswald, to Dr. Franklin, the only Commissioner then in Paris, Mr. Jay being at Madrid and Mr. Adams in Holland. It is not the intention here to pursue the history of the negotiation any further than to speak of the parts in which the French have been supposed to have acted insidiously or unfairly towards their allies.

Mr. Grenville was commissioned to negotiate in Paris with the several belligerent Powers. In his first proposal to the French Court he said: "The King of England, to facilitate a peace, was disposed to treat of the independence of the United States with the King of France, on the condition that all other things should be placed on the footing of the treaty of 1763." Count de Vergennes answered, "that his Majesty could not treat of the interests of the United States, because he had no powers for that purpose; and that it comported with the dignity of the King of England, as well as of the United States, to enter into a direct negotiation between themselves for these objects." What stronger proof could be adduced, that, so far from aiming to control the American treaty, Count de Vergennes was for leaving it wholly in the hands of the American Commissioners? Mr. Grenville took care to profit by these hints. In his second letter to Mr. Fox, then one of the Secretaries of State, dated May 14th, he says:

"Every thing leads to the belief that the demands of France and Spain will be such as it will be found difficult, perhaps impossible, for England to comply with. It is from the expectations the Courts of Madrid and Versailles entertain of being supported by America in these claims, that they will derive the greatest confidence in making them; and, if so, whatever could be found practicable to weaken that support, and give to France and Spain even the apprehension of losing it, would be to take from them the strongest ground of their pretensions in a negotiation. It is true that the present state of the connexion of America with France, and the good faith she professes to observe in it, has given no prospect for proposing a separate and distinct treaty. But whether by giving, in the first instance, independence to America, instead of making it a conditional article of a general treaty, we might not gain the effects though not the form of a separate treaty; whether more might not be gained in well-founded expectation, than would be lost in substance; whether America, once possessed of her great object, would not be infinitely less likely to blend herself to other claims, than if that object should remain to be blended with every other, and stand part of a common interest; whether the American Commissioners would think themselves warranted, after such a measure, in adhering to the demands of France and Spain; or whether, if they should, the thirteen Provinces would consent to the carrying on the war upon such motives; all these are questions which seem of immediate and important consequence."

The ardent desire of separating the Americans from their allies in the negotiation is here clearly manifested. This desire was both natural and politic, and was founded on national pride and the unalterable aversion of the King of England, shown in all the previous attempts at a mediation, to the interference of any foreign Power between him and his former subjects. Mr. Fox was authorized to embrace the suggestions of Mr. Grenville, which in fact accorded with his own principles, and he wrote to him in reply:

"You should lose no time in taking all the advantage possible of the concession which his Majesty has, from his ardent desire of peace, been induced to make with respect to the independence of the thirteen States; and, in order to this end, I have it in command from his Majesty to authorize you to make the offer of the said independence in the first instance instead of making it a conditional article of a general treaty."

This mode of proceeding was highly approved by Count de Vergennes. He wrote to Mr. Grenville:

"The King desires peace too much not to have heard with the greatest satisfaction that his Britannic Majesty proposes, of his own accord, to acknowledge and declare directly the independence of the United States, and that this object will no longer be regarded as a conditional clause of a future general pacification."

Here again is convincing proof that the French Court wished independence to be secured without their intervention, and in a manner the most honorable to the United States, and the most consistent with their dignity as a free nation.

But these preliminaries were suddenly interrupted by the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, and a consequent change in the British Ministry. A new policy was soon discovered to direct the negotiation. The idea of granting independence in the first instance was disavowed. Mr. Fox resigned, as he would not retreat from the proposition he had made with so much formality in the name of the King. Mr. Grenville, at his own urgent request, was recalled. The negotiation with France and the other European Powers was entrusted to Mr. Fitzherbert, and that with the American Com-

missioners to Mr. Oswald. It was soon evident that there was a hope in the Cabinet under Lord Shelburne of establishing peace on a different basis, and of conceding independence as the price of peace, or for an equivalent in commercial privileges, or a concession of territory. The enabling act went through Parliament empowering his Majesty to make peace, and without a word about independence, or even alluding to the United States as a separate Power.

Mr. Oswald, who had not left Paris, presented himself to Dr. Franklin as the British Commissioner, with instructions from Lord Shelburne, and a promise that his commission would soon be forwarded. Conversations were now held concerning the outlines of a treaty. Dr. Franklin proposed three articles, which he said were essential and necessary for a peace; "independence, full and complete; a settlement of the boundaries on the ancient footing; a freedom of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland and elsewhere." These articles, and others considered by Franklin advisable for securing a permanent peace, were sent over to the Ministry, and Mr. Oswald was authorized to treat by assuming the essential articles as the basis of a treaty. It thus appears that, at the outset, the British Ministry decided to yield the fisheries, although they afterwards struggled hard to retain them.

Just at this time Mr. Jay arrived from Madrid and joined in the negotiation, and in fact was for several weeks chiefly concerned in it, as Dr. Franklin was confined by illness, and could take little part except in occasional consultations. Mr. Oswald's commission was at length produced. The American Commissioners were justly dissatisfied with it, and Mr. Jay refused to proceed unless it was altered. The United States were not alluded to as a separate Power, but were called "Colonies or Plantations in North America." It appeared, moreover, that independence was to be granted as the first article of the treaty. Mr. Jay insisted that it ought to be done previously by proclamation, but Mr. Oswald replied that the King could not issue such a proclamation without the authority of Parliament, and if the treaty were to be delayed till the meeting of Parliament, and the subject in this form were to be brought before that assembly, no one could foresee the consequences. After long discussions Mr. Jay finally agreed that, with the consent of Dr. Franklin, he would proceed under the commission if the preamble should be so altered that their constituents should be denominated "the thirteen United States of America." The commission was sent back to London, and the change was made without hesitation. Independence was finally secured by the first article in the treaty, and not by a previous acknowledgment. Mr. Adams had said, in a letter to Dr. Franklin, "if they make a treaty of peace with the United States of America this is acknowledgment enough for me."

In the midst of these skirmishes Count de Vergennes was consulted. He thought the commission valid, and that they might proceed under it, if they took care to secure independence by an article in the treaty. The proposal to treat was in fact a recognition. Dr. Franklin seemed to be of this opinion. Although he disliked the commission, yet, as it was faulty only in form, he doubted the expediency of sending it back, and thereby doubling the treaty, and perhaps endangering it by raising new difficulties. Mr. Jay's suspicion was strangely excited by this interview with Count de Vergennes. He said to Dr. Franklin "that it was evident the Court did not wish to see our independence acknowledged by Britain until they had made all their uses of us." Dr. Franklin replied, "this Court has hitherto treated us very fairly, and suspicions to their disadvantage should not be readily entertained." Nearly six years' steady and intimate intercourse, on all the important affairs between the two countries, would seem to have furnished him with the proper means of knowledge, and to have authorized him to speak with confidence.

Mr. Jay was not satisfied, however, but continued still to suspect an underplot or some concealed design. A few days later he wrote as follows to Mr. Livingston, Secretary of Foreign Affairs:

"I am persuaded that this Court chooses to postpone an acknowledgment of our independence by Britain to the conclusion of a general peace, in order to keep us under their direction until not only their and our objects are attained, but until Spain shall be gratified in her demands to exclude every body from the Gulf, &c. We ought not to let France know that we have such ideas. While they think us free from suspicion they will think us more open; and we should make no other use of this discovery than to put us on our guard."

Mr. Jay might well have imagined with what astonishment Mr. Livingston would receive this disclosure, if he had known, as was the fact, that Count de Vergennes communicated fully and without reserve the details of the negotiation to the French Minister in Philadelphia, who showed them in good faith to the American Secretary, and thereby informed him of the actual state of things, and of the undisguised sentiments of the French Court. This suspicion presents itself in striking contrast with the official declaration of Count de Vergennes to the British negotiator above cited, that the King had heard with "the greatest satisfaction" that his Britannic Majesty would acknowledge the independence of the United States as the preliminary step to a treaty. This mode was certainly preferred by the French Court, but the other would attain the end, and it was believed not worth while to carry on a contest about forms, merely for the sake of a form.

Mr. Jay discovered other causes of suspicion. One of these contributed so much to influence the future conduct of the Commissioners that it deserves notice. The tangled web of Oswald's commission had scarcely been unravelled, when it came to the knowledge of Mr. Jay that M. de Rayneval, the principal secretary under Count de Vergennes in the Department of Foreign Affairs, had suddenly disappeared, and was on his way to London. He immediately applied himself to conjecture the objects of this hasty and unexpected journey, and he believed them to be the following, as stated in his official dispatch:

"First. To let Lord Shelburne know that the demands of America, to be treated by Great Britain as independent previous to a treaty, were not approved by this Court, and that the offer of Britain to make that acknowledgment in an article of the proposed treaty was, in the Count's opinion, sufficient."

"Secondly. To sound Lord Shelburne on the subject of the fishery, and to discover whether Britain would agree to divide it with France to the exclusion of all others."

"Thirdly. To impress Lord Shelburne with the determination of Spain to possess the exclusive navigation of the Gulf of Mexico, and of their desire to keep us from the Mississippi; and also to hint to him the propriety of such a line as on the one hand would satisfy Spain, and on the other leave to Britain all the country north of the Ohio."

Other reasons were assigned, wearing the same complexion, but these are the most important. Now, what was the real object of Rayneval's tour to London? To solve this problem it is necessary to premise that Count de Grasse, who, while a prisoner, had spent some time in London, and held interviews with Lord Shelburne in which the terms of peace were discussed. He had just returned to Paris, and presented to Count de Vergennes a series of articles which he felt authorized to say would be approved by the British Ministry. These articles differed so much from those which had been exhibited by Mr. Fitzherbert that Count de Vergennes was perplexed with the discordance, and began to suspect the sincerity of Lord Shelburne in his proposals for peace, as offered by the British negotiator. To clear up this doubt, M. de Rayne-

val was dispatched to London, as will be seen by the first part of his instructions, dated September 6th:

M. de Rayneval will ask an interview with Lord Shelburne, after having sent to him my letter, which he will accompany with one from himself, and he will exhibit to him the points brought over and presented by Count de Grasse, and demand of him whether these are exactly conformable to his intentions and dispositions."

"If Lord Shelburne disavows them, M. de Rayneval will declare to him that his commission is at an end, and, without any further explication, will demand his passport for leaving England."

"If Lord Shelburne acknowledges that these points are the substance of what he said to Count de Grasse, then M. de Rayneval will inform him that they may be taken as the basis of preliminaries, subject to such modifications and changes as may be found necessary; and he will request that instructions conformable to them may be sent to Mr. Fitzherbert, that time may not be lost in vain formalities, and in disputes to ascertain who shall speak first."

"M. de Rayneval will carefully avoid even the appearance of being authorized to negotiate, and will be attentive to make it known that he is the less able to enter into any negotiation, as the irrevocable intention of the King is not to treat, except in concert and conjointly with his allies and friends."

Here we have the whole of Rayneval's instructions, so far as the object of his mission was concerned. In regard to Spain, he was authorized to give the assurance that the King desired peace. He had no instructions concerning American affairs. Lord Shelburne disavowed having made any formal overtures to Count de Grasse, but he held several conversations with M. de Rayneval, the substance of which was communicated in writing to Count de Vergennes. The American topics were incidentally touched upon twice. Lord Shelburne declared that he had always opposed independence, but it had now become necessary, and would be granted without conditions. When Lord Shelburne said that he hoped the King of France did not intend to support the claims of the Americans to the boundaries and fisheries, M. de Rayneval answered "that he did not doubt the King would do all in his power to keep the Americans within the bounds of justice and reason;" but, he adds, "the discussion was not continued; for I did not choose to uphold or weaken the pretensions of the Americans." All these particulars agree precisely with the reasons assigned by Count de Vergennes to the Commissioners for M. de Rayneval's journey to London, which was, "that, by conversing with Lord Shelburne about peace, and matters connected with it, he might be able to judge whether a pacific disposition really prevailed in the British Court." Hence the entire fabric of these formidable suspicions falls to the ground. Mr. Jay's eminent abilities, integrity, and patriotism gave so much weight to his character that even his suspicions have been assumed as historical facts.

Another incident occurred just at this time which helped to fan the flame of distrust. A letter written by Barbé Marbois, Secretary of Legation to the French Minister at Philadelphia, was intercepted by the British, deciphered, translated, and sent to Mr. Fitzherbert, who conveyed it to the American Commissioners. Besides certain speculations, not very intelligible in the intercepted and translated copy, the writer shows himself decidedly opposed to the American claim to the fisheries, and he undertakes to give advice as to the mode of informing the American people that the claims would not be supported by France. But it was afterwards known that this letter was written without the knowledge of the Minister, who was then absent on a visit to the army. The writer was also deceived, as has been since ascertained, by yielding a too easy confidence to representations made to him by persons unfriendly to the political leaders in Massachusetts.

The following extracts are taken from a letter written by Count de Vergennes to M. de la Luzerne, November 25th, only five days before the signature of the American treaty:

"I know not whether the question of the fisheries has yet come before the English and American Plenipotentiaries. They have been for some time occupied with the boundaries. The Americans are not less skilled than the English in drawing indefinite lines, and claiming for them a title and a right. They think they show great moderation in contenting themselves with the left bank of the Mississippi as the extreme boundary. Such is nearly the present state of the negotiation, as far as I can judge from what the American Commissioners have been disposed to tell me. The only useful thing which they have as yet obtained is a change in the powers of the English Plenipotentiaries, in which the thirteen provinces are qualified as the United States."

"If the American Commissioners are exact in the accounts they render to their constituents, they will not complain that we have sought to influence and constrain them in their negotiations—(à l'infuence et à la contrainte dans leur négociation.) I receive whatsoever they voluntarily communicate. They know that, when occasions may require it, I shall render them such good offices as may be in my power; but I do not put myself in the way of knowing more than they are disposed to disclose to me. I shall always be prompt in coming to their assistance; for I foresee that they will have more than one difficulty to overcome if they persist in their first pretensions. I cannot promise myself that the English Ministers will easily yield to the claims of the Commissioners of the United States to the fisheries and boundaries. The latter object may be arranged by mutual sacrifices and compensations; but, before we can form a judgment of the issue of the former, it is necessary to know what the Americans understand by the fisheries. If it is fishing on the banks at a distance from the shore, it seems to me a natural right; but if they claim a fishery in consequence of a title which they had to it while British subjects, can they in justice reserve a right to it to a quality which they have renounced? What would the Americans say if the English should pretend to exercise the fishery on their coast?"

"The difficulties relative to the boundaries and fisheries are not the only ones to be overcome. The case of the Loyalists is still more thorny. The American commissioners, in conformity with their instructions, undoubtedly appear resolved not to listen to any facilities in this respect. But can the English decently abandon to contempt and misery the people who have sacrificed themselves to their attachment to them? It is the usage of all nations in treaties of peace to stipulate for the amnesty and restitution of the confiscated goods of the subjects who have separated themselves from their country, and adhered to the party making the war. The Americans oppose to this usage, first, the impossibility of restoring the confiscated goods, even if they should stipulate it, since the confiscations have been made by the Legislatures of the States, and Congress has not power to require or compel the Legislatures to restore them; secondly, the feeble security which the Loyalists would enjoy, if they should return to the United States, since the resentment of the people against them is extremely great. These reasons are undoubtedly good; but they are not enough to save the dignity of England, who never entirely abandon a people whose embarrassments have grown out of their fidelity to that country."

"It is very essential, therefore, if peace is desired, to seek some mode of removing these difficulties. The American commissioners do not seem deeply impressed with the importance of laboring this point. They have no fears of the continuation of the war; but I confess that I fear it, and above all when I reflect that the United States, without means within their own, and without energy to procure these means within themselves, are perpetually applying to us for aid."

From these extracts we may learn the profound reserve which had been exercised towards the French Court during the whole negotiation, for at this last stage Count de Vergennes had really no knowledge of what had been done. We learn, also, what is confirmed by all the collateral testimony, that he took no pains whatever to interfere with the treaty, or to throw obstacles in the way of any advantages they might obtain. His opinions on the three great points are clearly expressed, as they always had been, but not with the design of preventing the Americans from gaining them, if it could be done without prolonging the war, and involving

France in a renewed contest, and for the attainment of which she had given no pledge in the treaty of alliance. There was no good reason why the commissioners should consult the French Court on these topics, because the principles of that Court were known: but considering the nature of their instructions, and the express terms of the treaty of alliance, it would be difficult to justify their impetuous secrecy and reserve, their jealousy and suspiciousness, and, least of all, their signing the treaty without the knowledge of their allies. If the French had done the same, could the act have been approved or defended? This success in separating the American commissioners from their allies was a triumph to the British. Coxé, in his "History of the House of Austria," says: "Mr. Fitzherbert fulfilled his delicate office with great ability and address. While he treated with Vergennes, he succeeded in alarming Franklin, Adams, and Jay, and prevailed on them to sign separate and provisional articles, which severed America from France."

It should be remembered, however, that the Commissioners were unanimous in the course they pursued. If they committed a fault, it resulted from a high and praiseworthy motive—a scrupulous regard for the honor and interests of their country. They never pretended to urge in their defence any other reasons than such as were drawn from suspicious circumstances, inferences, conjectures, and deceptive appearances. No direct or positive proofs have ever been produced that the French Court had any sinister designs, or concealed purpose of gaining advantages at the expense of their allies, or that they did not faithfully fulfil the promises contained in the treaty of alliance; and nothing is found, if taken in connexion with the whole train of events and the whole mass of testimony. Wilnot, in his "Historical View" concerning the Loyalists, speaking of the efforts that were made by the British negotiators to procure some compensation for them, says: "The writer of these sheets, who has seen the correspondence between the Government at home, and those who were employed in negotiating this important business at Paris, can assert with confidence that the Court of Versailles absolutely refused to come to any treaty or decision at all, till the American commissioners were completely satisfied."

It is not strange that the knowledge of the signature of the treaty should have come with astonishment upon Count de Vergennes. He certainly was not prepared for such a disclosure. But his first letter to M. de la Luzerne, after this event, will show with what spirit it was received:

"You will surely be gratified, as well as myself, with the very extensive advantages which our allies, the Americans, are to receive from the peace, but you certainly will not be less surprised than I have been at the conduct of the Commissioners. According to the instructions of Congress they ought to have done nothing without our participation. I have informed you that the King did not seek to influence the negotiation any further than his offices might be necessary to his friends. The American commissioners will not say that I have interfered, and much less that I have wept them with my curiosity. They have cautiously kept themselves at a distance from me."

The tone and language of this extract, and indeed of the whole letter, are consistent with all the preceding declarations of the French Minister. So far from expressing disappointment or dissatisfaction, he is gratified with the advantages obtained by the Americans. Would such have been his language if it had been the intention of the French Court to prevent these advantages, or to gain them on an equivalent for France? And it should be borne in mind that the extracts to which the reader's attention has been called in this paper as well as the preceding, are chiefly taken from the confidential letters of the Minister to the Ambassadors abroad, and cannot be suspected of having a double meaning or delusive purport, unless we suppose him deceiving the very agents on whom he relied to execute his intentions.

We shall here dismiss this subject, with entire conviction that the charges of bad faith and dishonorable intentions against the French Government, in their relations with the United States during the war of the Revolution, which have been confidently asserted as matters of history, are without foundation and unjust. Many circumstances have contributed to nourish a prejudice, which time and facts ought to obliterate. Soon after the alliance was formed, when the first enthusiasm had a little subsided, there were persons in this country who professed to dislike it, who could not divest themselves of their hereditary prejudices against the French, nor brook a dependence for any thing on these ancient and habitual enemies of the English race. The border wars had left a deep impression. These persons were unable to conceive it possible that such a nation could be generous or even just, and they perplexed their thoughts with surmises of indirect motives, selfish ends, and ambitious designs; a concealed and far-reaching policy which would at last show itself to the dismay of those who confided in these new friends, if not to the ruin of the country. There were others who could never be satisfied that the French did enough—who seemed to think the resources of France in money, ships of war, and troops, were inexhaustible, without reflecting that she had to meet the English navy and armies in all parts of the world, and without knowing, what was soon afterwards demonstrated, that her finances were in an extremely precarious condition. Persons of both these descriptions were numerous; their complaints were as loud as they were unreasonable; their suspicions as wakeful and inventive as they were groundless.

In a calm survey of the past, we are bound to divest ourselves of the remnants of these prejudices, to search for truth, and judge with candor. If we inquire and decide in this spirit, we shall find that France performed faithfully all that she promised to the United States. She did more; she lent us money in our time of need from her own exhausted treasury, which she did not promise; she relinquished the interest of that money for a term of years, and after the war she allowed us to return it by long payments to suit our convenience; she sent her fleets and armies to assist in fighting our battles on our coasts and on our own soil; she stood by us firmly till our independence was acknowledged by the Power which had contended in arms against it for eight years, and till it was secured by an honorable treaty of peace. Why should we be unwilling to allow the merits of these services, and to render justice? Policy requires it, even if we leave justice and honor out of the question. A nation as well as an individual may have many occasions for friends; and friendships are preserved by the remembrance and acknowledgment of benefits mutually conferred. The character of a nation is in its history; it is the inheritance and not the acquisition of any existing generation. Men of all countries cherish this inheritance as their birthright, which they are bound to protect as much from injurious suspicion as from open assault. It becomes us to respect in other nations what we value in ourselves, and to yield what we would demand.

FATAL RAILROAD ACCIDENT.—A brakeman, named Patrick Hart, attached to the train coming from Gratton to Boston, met with a dreadful death, a few miles above Lowell, on Monday evening. He had crept along upon the top of the cars in the regular way, to procure some matches, and was on his return when the train reached a bridge, by which he was struck in the head and knocked between the cars on to the track. Nothing was known of the accident by the others attached to the train until he was missed. The train was then backed three-quarters of a mile, and the unfortunate man found lying upon the track. The cars in passing over him had broken his body in two, but the blood and brains were not so much as to have occasioned almost instant death.

TERRIBLE TORNADO.—On Saturday afternoon the city and vicinity of Schenectady (New York) was visited by a terrible tornado, which in its progress did enormous injury. It passed over the College and unroofed the building, and committed other depredations on the building. It will cost at least \$4,000 to make good the repairs. Several other buildings were unroofed, and a number of barns and sheds were carried off their foundations. Professor YATES's beautiful garden was greatly damaged. Nearly all the trees were prostrated. Every thing in its course was swept up and carried uprooted and twisted in two as though cut by a saw. A man named Riggs was carried about fifty yards, and escaped with a slight contusion on the head."

Ms. Catherine Butterworth died at Dubuque, Iowa, on the 30th ultimo, at the advanced age of one hundred and fourteen years! She was a native of Kildare, Ireland.

SHEEP HUSBANDRY IN THE SOUTH.

SIXTH LETTER OF H. S. RANDALL, ESQ.

GENTLEMEN: With your permission, I will now resume my review of Col. RANDALL's excellent series of letters, now in course of publication in the New York Farmers' Library, on the adaptation of the South to the purposes of sheep husbandry. Having obtained admission to your columns in the first instance, through the politeness of Mr. SKINNER, I will endeavor not to trespass to any unreasonable extent upon your indulgence, fully aware, as I am, that other and equally important public interests demand the space I might otherwise be tempted to occupy.

In his sixth letter Mr. RANDALL proceeds to consider the profits of sheep husbandry in the Southern States, with reference especially to "the practicability and comparative economy of making it the basis of an effectual amelioration in soils naturally sterile, or those which have been rendered so by excessive and injudicious cultivation." To render these soils productive, he insists that the means must be not only ample, but cheap. The ordinary animal manures from stables and other accessible sources are not attainable in sufficient quantities for this purpose, and when transported by land-carriage to any considerable distance become too expensive. The animal manures derived from the agency of commerce are still more expensive. Gypsum or plaster of Paris is in itself inadequate to the effective amelioration of the soil; and ashes, though greatly more efficient in quality, are too limited in quantity to accomplish the object in view. The marl of Lower Virginia and South Carolina, underlying as it probably does the entire tertiary formation of the Atlantic States, and the swamp mud, "rich with the alluvial deposition of ages," which abounds in the whole tide-water zone, are indeed inexhaustible sources of manure; but the former is valuable only where there is a deficiency of organic matter; and the amelioration thereby effected is factitious—the lime-serving only to exhaust the little organic matter existing in the soil, and leaving it to greater eventual sterility—a consequence itself to be avoided by the addition of organic matter. Marl, too, is a very expensive species of manure, and by no means permanent in its effects. It is even doubtful whether swamp mud of the best quality is not worth more per load; but this too is expensive, and often impracticable. Both are too costly for the purposes of an extensive amelioration of the soil; and the writer hazards the opinion "that it would be better economy to desert the worn-out or naturally barren soils of our southeastern coast, and purchase the virgin and fertile lands of the southwest, than to attempt to reclaim the former by means so expensive as those above indicated."

A mixed system of green and animal manuring—the latter made attainable by means of sheep husbandry—is recommended as the best method of profitably reclaiming these worn-out soils. The experience and testimony of various English farmers, under analogous circumstances, are adduced to sustain this view of the subject, and the reasons given why sheep are preferred for this purpose to horned cattle. In England and in many parts of the United States they are regarded, even independent of their fleece, as much more profitable. The singular hallucination of Col. John Taylor, of Virginia, on this subject, is adverted to and ascribed to "deep-rooted prejudices imbibed before his judgment was ripened or his experience formed." In the Northern and Eastern States sheep are likewise preferred as improvers of poor lands, mainly, however, by summer pasturage, and not, as in England, for their marketable qualities. In the Southern States a similar policy would be found equally expedient and profitable on lands yielding even a scanty supply of excellent grasses. "Those grasses," he observes, "will every year increase, and the land will be gradually fertilized by the droppings of the sheep, without a cent's expenditure on it of any kind; and every particle of herbage will be turned to its most profitable account by being converted into wool, mutton, and manure." Full and explicit directions are given for the best preparation of the land for green manures, the proper plants for the purpose pointed out, and practical rules of great value and pertinency suggested for their cultivation. He then continues:

"In view of all my preceding statements, do you ask me if I advocate sheep husbandry exclusively on all the lands at the disposal of the South, which already are or should be devoted to grazing? Most assuredly not. I have already laid it down as a maxim, that agricultural produce should be controlled by the demand or want, and the adaptation of the country to such production. By this rule, at least, the South should never import a horse, (unless for the improvement of breeds), a mule, a pound of beef, pork, butter, cheese, or wool. She wants them all, and she can produce them all more economically than she can import them. The declared maxim, in politics, on the subject of the division of labor, is, 'let each man do that which he does best.' The farmer, pursuing mixed husbandry will not generally call for the best of the best of the other, and his losses are rarely considerable. It is better to play for a hit than a gammon, where, as in the case of the small capitalists, affluence or poverty stand the hazard of the die."

"If the above principles are true, the South is called upon to increase the breeding of other domestic animals, as well as sheep. To an extent sufficient to supply her own wants, I consider her imperiously called upon to do so. Advocate the breeding of sheep specially, on a vastly more extended scale, because, as has been already shown, they are the best, if not the only, reclaimers of your unproductive lands; because in the surplus of the products of grazing, which these extensive reclamations will bring about, the farmer, you the exporting article (wool) for which you can find the largest external-market, and in growing which you can best compete with other producers."

The advantages which the South possesses over the North in reference to an extended system of sheep husbandry are thus strongly and eloquently presented in the conclusion of this letter:

"The South, then, possesses the same great advantage with the Northwest in the production of wool—cheap lands—and superadded to this, she has the short, mild winters, which give her a decided advantage over both the North and Northwest. She has a marked advantage over the Northern and Eastern States in both particulars, and instead of importing manufactured wools from them, she ought to supply them by export with at least the raw material. And she will do this, at no distant day, unless her sons are content, in the great struggle and battle of industrial interests, to sacrifice their own by apathy or irresolution."

It is assuredly much to be desired that the South should awake to a conception of her own true interest in this respect, especially when that interest is so clearly and distinctly pointed out and demonstrated by her Northern neighbors. The facts and arguments comprehended in the letter before us are of themselves conclusive in reference to our policy. They are presented with a force, a candor, and distinctness which entitle them to our best and most serious regard. The author of these letters is evidently a master of his subject. There is nothing superficial, nothing indicative of the mere book-farmer in his comments, but every thing to show that he is at home on the farm, and especially on a farm where sheep husbandry constitutes the staple agricultural interest. He seems anxiously desirous of communicating